



# Debbie Strong Houston - 2021

## DEBBIE STRONG HOUSTON

My first dance career started at Marion Trignere Dance Studio when I was 5 years old. I signed up for every dance lesson that was offered and eagerly volunteered for every solo in the dance recital! I aspired to be a "Rockette" which caused me to try harder but unfortunately that was not what my Mom had in mind for me!!!!

Growing up in Charlotte, I do not ever remember anyone from junior high school through high school and college that could not dance. At least learning the "basic" which got them respect on the dance floor. I think that most of us watched our siblings and their friends dance with the bedroom closet door and full-length mirror and emulated those steps and moves.

Charlotte also had great dance hangouts with great juke boxes and Sunday afternoons was the place to hang out and dance. The B & G Trading Post was the trendy spot of my area, along with the Cellar. With fake I.D.'s in hand that is where we would head! I saw the best dancers of all times at the B & G Trading Post on Sunday afternoons!

My junior high school had a "teen" room that was open in the mornings before school and during lunch with a great juke box where we would all go and dance! Also, my high school had a dance "pit" in the cafeteria where we would dance. The juke box was so great that folks from other high schools would come over to dance.

Then on to Ocean Drive and Cherry Grove! The first time that I walked into Sonny's Pavilion, I could not believe what I saw! Everybody could dance and I mean really dance. The best female dancer at the time was Becky Williamson (Murray) from Whiteville NC and the guys would line up to dance with her. There were a lot of great female dancers from Whiteville but she was a show stopper. She was on the floor nonstop all night. I mentored her in every way possible!

We later became good friends and laughed about how I idolized her stage presence and dance steps. She always said that she taught me everything I knew and I don't disagree! I just don't think that I ever perfected her great style!

Over the years these great times that we all spent together at the beach have kept us close and our families close and dance was one of the main reasons that we have had so much fun, young and old.

Thanks to all of my lifelong friends who I have had the pleasure of hanging out with, dancing with and sharing such great memories of our youth and senior youth with! The beach for sure was where the most special memories were made and I still have most of those friends who I cherish! I am so blessed!

I am honored to be included in this group of great dancers who share the same great memories that I do. Thanks for the honor of being inducted into the Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame and especially for the recognition from my peers. Quite an honor indeed!